

**Derrylyn Gorski
First Selectman
Town of Bethany
Public Hearing Testimony
Before the Planning & Development Committee
March 20, 2019**

**Re: SB-882 – AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ARBITRATION AND
MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB-882 which will adjust the employee contribution rate to reduce the burden on municipalities, which are shouldering a disproportionate burden in funding pension costs under the Municipal Employees Retirements System (MERS).

Because the employee contribution rate under MERS is mandated by statute, the town has been required to contribute a greater percentage. For example, in FY06, the MERS employer contribution was 6.75%. However, in FY13, the MERS employer contribution rate was 12%, costing the Town of Bethany an additional \$20,000 per year. This is putting enormous pressure on our local budget.

The employee contribution rate, which has never been increased since the inception of the program, should be adjusted to provide a fairer structure for funding MERS.

Please support SB-882 to assist towns in controlling pension costs.

Thank you.